

not only to reduce overweight and obesity, but also to encourage exercise of all kinds.

The LIFE Act would provide \$25 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a coordinated national effort to reverse increasingly sedentary lifestyles and diets that are high in fat and sugar. Specifically, my bill seeks to provide the first national strategy to combat the overweight and obesity epidemic by directing the CDC to do three things: train health professionals to recognize the signs of obesity early and to educate people concerning healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition and regular exercise; conduct public education campaigns about how to recognize and address overweight and obesity; and develop intervention strategies to be used by the states in everyday life, such as in the workplace and in community settings. This legislation, however, meets the bare minimum for what is needed to address our most important health crisis.

In 2010, estimates from the CDC National Center for Health Statistics showed that since 1980, the percentage of children who are overweight has more than doubled, and the percentage of adolescents who are overweight has tripled. The CDC also reports that Type 2 Diabetes, once considered an adult disease, is now widespread among children. The rising cost of the health care system, including insurance premiums, reflects this epidemic. Today, chronic diseases, many of which are caused or exacerbated by overweight and obesity, account for 70 percent of all deaths in the U.S., and 86 percent of U.S. medical care costs.

A focused national health initiative would provide guidance to the states to engage in similar programs, as mayors of some cities have done. A national focus could lead to changes, such as full participation in high school physical education classes, which dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 33 percent in 2005. Changes in nutrition are equally critical because more than half of all young people consume too much fat, a factor in the doubling of the percentage of overweight youth. Data also show an increase in unhealthy eating habits for adults and no change in physical activity.

According to a 2017 study conducted by the American College of Sports Medicine, the District of Columbia is one of the fittest cities in the United States and, yet, even here, obesity continues to be a severe problem. Most of the obesity epidemic is exercise-and-food-related. Approximately one-fifth of District residents are considered obese.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation to mobilize the country now before entirely preventable health conditions, which often begin in childhood, overwhelm the nation's health care system.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ROBERT C. SWEENEY

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Robert C. Sweeney—a bold and courageous community leader, a pioneer for New Jersey workers, and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

He will be deeply missed by the entire State of New Jersey, particularly our brothers and sisters in labor for whom he tirelessly advocated throughout his entire life.

Bob was committed to fighting for the working men and women of New Jersey. For twenty-five years, Bob served as President and Business Manager of Local 399 of the International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Ironworkers in South Jersey. As the longest-serving business manager in the history of the ironworkers, Bob fought vigorously to defend the labor movement and New Jersey's dedicated workforce. Bob's unflinching values and passionate leadership continue to live on through the steadfast work of his sons—Robert Sweeney, New Jersey Senate President Stephen Sweeney, and New Jersey AFL-CIO Vice President Richard Sweeney.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply grateful for Bob Sweeney's invaluable contributions to our community and our state, and I am confident that his memory will serve as an inspiration for our future generations.

IN RECOGNITION OF GREG COLLINS, GREATER WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS' MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greg Collins, who will receive the "Man of the Year" Award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons. He will be honored during the Friendly Sons annual Saint Patrick's Day celebration on Friday, March 16, 2018. Greg has forty years of finance experience and is the former senior vice president and area president of Wells Fargo Bank.

Greg is a native of Kingston, Pennsylvania. After graduating from West Side Central Catholic, he began his career as a teller at Wyoming National Bank. While working as a teller, Greg attended night classes at Misericordia University, majoring in business administration. While working for Wyoming National Bank and its successors, Greg took on more responsibility, taking management positions and eventually advancing to senior leadership roles. From 2009 until his retirement in September 2017, Greg served as Wells Fargo's community bank area president for Northeastern Pennsylvania. He led more than three hundred team members and oversaw the operations of thirty-seven Wells Fargo branch banking offices across nine counties.

Greg remains an active member of the community in his retirement. He is a member of the board of trustees at Misericordia University, a board member of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry, Leadership Wilkes-Barre, the Wilkes-Barre YMCA, the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, and the United Way of Wyoming Valley. In 2015, he chaired the American Heart Association Gala for Northeastern Pennsylvania. He was the recipient of the 2015 North Star Award from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Council Boy Scouts of America, the 2015 Distinguished Leadership Award from Leadership Wilkes-Barre, and the 2015 Community Serv-

ice Award from the Salvation Army. Greg is a 2010 graduate of Leadership Wilkes-Barre's Executive Leadership Program and a 4th-degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

It is an honor to recognize Greg Collins as he accepts the "Man of the Year" Award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons. I am grateful to him for his forty years of service to the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and I thank him for his continued leadership in his community. I wish him all the best on this Saint Patrick's Day.

TRIBUTE TO JEFF BALLENGER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jeff Ballenger of Council Bluffs, Iowa for his leadership and vision in helping organize 13 honor flights that have taken nearly 3,500 Iowa veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials built in their honor.

Jeff and his father, Bill Ballenger, saw a need to honor our country's aging veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War. The Ballengers have partnered with HyVee, Inc., Casey's General Stores, and others to raise more than \$3 million to fund this special endeavor. Jeff said, "It takes nearly 200 volunteers to help make each honor flight a success. Dad and I might be the front, but we could not do it without the volunteers who are so important in turning the plans into a reality."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Jeff on his dedication and diligence to promote, organize, and fund the 13 honor flights for our Veterans. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jeff and in wishing him nothing but continued success in all his endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 7TH AN- NIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE SYRIAN WAR

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 7th anniversary of the beginning of the Syrian War.

Since the conflict began in 2011, over 500,000 Syrians have been killed, including 50,000 children by the murderous dictator Bashar al-Assad and his Russian and Iranian backers. These brutal regimes not only target civilians with their artillery strikes, but the Assad regime continues to use chemical weapons, including chlorine gas, to kill his own citizens with impunity.

Over the last 7 years, over 30 chemical weapons attacks have taken place in Syria. Bashar al Assad has used these chemical weapons in clear violation of international law, and against countless resolutions by the United Nations Security Council. The world